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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/SPG  
NSC FOR HUDSON

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [EG](#) [SU](#)  
SUBJECT: SPECIAL ENVOY WILLIAMSON ASKS EGYPT TO PRESS SUDAN  
ON UNAMID

REF: 2007 CAIRO 3101

Classified by Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Meeting on February 24, Special Envoy to Sudan Richard Williamson asked Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit to press the GOS to drop its obstruction to UN/AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) deployment. Aboul Gheit said that the GOE shares the USG's interest in stabilizing Darfur, but defended GOS objections to Swedish, Norwegian, and Thai troops deploying as part of UNAMID. Stressing that the UN should seek troops from Muslim nations, Aboul Gheit said that Egypt is in renewed discussions with the UN on its offer of two more mechanized infantry battalions in addition to the one that the UN had accepted. Aboul Gheit said Libya would need to be on board with any plans concerning Chad, and suggested creating a mechanism for the U.S., Egypt, France, and Libya to engage. Williamson emphasized using the 2011 referendum on Sudanese unity as a framework for North-South cooperation; Aboul Gheit focused on looking "beyond 2011."  
End summary.

SE Williamson Asks GOE to Press GOS on UNAMID  
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¶2. (C) Special Envoy to Sudan Richard Williamson told Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit in their meeting February 24 that President Bush sought to alleviate the human tragedy in Darfur and to speed UNAMID deployment there in support of that humanitarian goal. Williamson emphasized that neither the U.S. nor the international community is seeking regime change, and that stability on the ground through UNAMID, to which Khartoum previously agreed, helps rather than hurts the GOS. In particular, dispersing the internally displaced persons (IDP) camps - a hot-bed of rebel activity - cannot happen until UNAMID provides a safe environment for people to return home. UNAMID, along with a European force on the Chad border, would also hinder rebel movements and action. The U.S. has pledged USD 100 million to train and equip African countries to participate in UNAMID, however this will take time. Meanwhile, the Swedes, Norwegians, and Thais are ready now, and the GOS is unreasonably blocking their deployment. Williamson thanked Egypt for its contribution to UNAMID, and asked Aboul Gheit to emphasize the message to the GOS that speedy UNAMID deployment is in the GOS' own interests. "The U.S. can speak loudly, but when Egypt whispers Sudan listens." Williamson also asked Aboul Gheit to press other Arab countries to send the same message to the GOS.

¶3. (C) Aboul Gheit responded by noting that, while "we must be firm" with the GOS, the USG should "try to gain their confidence" rather than make threats. The international community had erred with constant talk of sanctions and UN Security Council resolutions, he said. As a result, he

continued, the GOS is suspicious that the U.S. is focused on regime change, or on trying Sudanese officials before the International Criminal Court or new local courts. However, "if you speak courteously you will engender a response," he said, suggesting that recently appointed chairman of the Assessment and Evaluation Commission UK Ambassador Derek Plumbly, formerly the UK's ambassador to Egypt, could be an effective interlocutor with Khartoum.

#### GOE Defends GOS on UNAMID, More Egyptian Troops

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14. (C) Aboul Gheit defended GOS (and Libyan) objections to Swedish, Norwegian, and Thai troops for UNAMID, and criticized the UN for "picking and choosing" troops from among those offered. The GOS had agreed that logistical and technical support for UNAMID could come from the international community, Aboul Gheit said, but had never understood from the 2006 agreement that created the hybrid force that non-African fighting troops would be part of UNAMID. Instead of insisting on these forces the UN should accept more Muslim troops, which would be more acceptable to the GOS.

15. (C) For instance, Aboul Gheit noted that the UN still has not accepted two of the three mobilized infantry battalions that Egypt had offered for UNAMID. The GOE was now in renewed discussions with the UN DPKO on sending another battalion, but the Ministry of Defense, while it "did not say no," is "not showing as much eagerness" on sending further infantry. Additionally, the UN had never responded to Egypt's offer to supply a unit from its elite traditional "Haganah" camel division - which in fact patrols the Egyptian side of the ancient "Darb al-Arba'in" ("Track of 40 Days")

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caravan route from Sudan. Instead, the UN had recruited 300 "English-speaking camel-riders from India."

16. (C) Williamson noted USG displeasure with the UN DPKO's slow pace on UNAMID. He suggested setting up a mechanism in New York of a small group of the most influential African and Arab countries to convene and compare notes on working with the UN Secretariat to help move the process along. Aboul Gheit immediately accepted the proposal.

#### Pressuring the Rebels, Talking With France and Libya

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17. (C) The international community was still too focused on pressuring the GOS rather than the rebels, Aboul Gheit said. He said that the U.S. and France need to coordinate on pressing the rebels, given France's involvement in Chad, and given that France "allowed" Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) leader Khalil Ibrahim to move his forces to N'djamena. Aboul Gheit further complained that France continues to host Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) leader Abdulwahid Nur in Paris despite his obstruction of the fall 2007 peace discussions. Williamson emphasized that the USG is raising the pressure on the rebels as well as the government. In particular, the USG is talking to the Chadian government to get them to stop their support for the rebels.

18. (C) Aboul Gheit advised creating a four-way mechanism between the U.S., France, Egypt, and Libya to address the situation, particularly given calls for a European force of the Chad/Sudan border. He said that Libya is skeptical but highly influential, through its customary ability to pay local tribes to hinder - or alternatively to cooperate with - the force's mission. "You must calm the Libyans" for this mission to succeed, he said.

CPA

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19. (C) Williamson confirmed that the U.S. continues to

support the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) as the framework for keeping North and South Sudan together, saying that the 2011 referendum on unity vs. separation should be seen as a framework to improve working relations between the North and South. Aboul Gheit also confirmed that stability in Sudan is high among Egypt's interests, and that in this regard Egypt continues to work to make unity attractive. As examples, Aboul Gheit noted his and Egyptian General Intelligence Service Director Soliman's fall 2007 trip to Juba to encourage the southern government to return to the National Unity Government (reftel), as well as Egyptian development projects to increase prosperity in the South. He warned, however, that the U.S. should understand that the Sudanese "are Africans - they take their time," and advised focusing not only on the short term but also "beyond 2011."

#### Egyptian Darfur Special Envoy Suggests More Cooperation

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¶10. (C) Earlier, SE Williamson met with Egyptian Special Envoy for Darfur Ambassador Ahmed Haggag on February 23. On North-South issues, Haggag advised Egyptian-U.S. cooperation to train South Sudanese to increase governing capacity, diminish corruption, and build institutions, all sorely needed for the South to develop and view unity with the North as an attractive option. Haggag also said that all international partners that signed the CPA, particularly the U.S., EU, UN, AU, China, Egypt, and Libya, should coordinate more closely on CPA implementation.

¶11. (C) Williamson noted that if the CPA unravels, peace and stability in Darfur will be impossible to achieve. Williamson emphasized focusing on humanitarian assistance and stability in Darfur and hindering rebel movements, noting the need for the GOS to be more pro-active. Haggag agreed, but also stressed that there is not enough pressure on the rebels. Gulf countries could also provide more funding, Haggag said. Nevertheless, Haggag noted that Darfur, while tragic, is merely a "side-show" to the "real issue" of North-South unity.

¶12. (U) SE Williamson has cleared this message.  
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